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THE
FAMILY-PRAYERS
OF THOSE
POOR CHRISTIANS,

WHO IN

Court and Country, in Cities,
Towns, Cottages and Farm-Hou-
ses, are in good earnest with Re-
ligion.

Together with their way of In-
tercession or Praying for others.



L O N D O N ,

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Family-Prayers of those poor Christians, who in Court and Country, in Cities, Towns, Cottages and Farm-Houses, are in good earnest with Religion.

together with their way of Intercession, or Praying for others.

THE Sum of our Christian Religion; *In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, Amen.*

(2.) The Prayer of Prayers; that wherein we ask all things necessary, for others as well as for our selves; for Soul and for Body; for our happy living in this world, for our happy going out of it, and for our most happy obtaining of that better world that is to come, namely, *Our Father which is in Heaven,---* With this preparation and not by all, but by one only) we pray for our selves and all others, the Lord Jesus Christ himself hath

not only taught, but also commanded us to pray, and to say, *Our Father which---*

(3.) The General Thanksgiving; that blessing of God for all his mercies that he is much pleased with; namely, *Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be world without end, Amen.* With this Introduction (said not by all, but by one only) let us bless the Lord our God for all his Mercies, in that form of words which he greatly delights in. *Glory be to the Father and---*

(4.) The Blessing of Blessings, and to our selves; *The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost with us all evermore, Amen.*

Being not able with any patience to think of living without common Prayers in their respective Families, they have used themselves to own the Blessing of God in common as they could, when they could not as they would. *ashamed, they say, they were, the rich,*

and Learned sort should go beyond them
 the duty it self, though they *do*, or
 least *seem* to do in the manner of
 performance. Set and long Meals they
 are used among *them*, and also *set*
 long Family-Prayers: But though
 neither of these could they equal
 it, yet equal, if not exceed them,
 would do, as in the wholesom-
 of their meats, never eating
 when they are hungry; so also in
 devoutness of their Morning and
 Evening Family-Prayers: Because these
 are nothing but these four
 now set down; said aloud, and
 leisurely, and deliberately, and
 jointly, by all; Parents, Children,
 Servants, and all that are pre-

and this upon these two grounds,
 sundry other:

Because they assure themselves,
 devotion is from them, and any
 Believers, true and acceptable de-
 to *that God who hath command-*
 ed, and knows the full importance
 though *we* do not; and has prom-

mised to hear and answer it, not according to our unworthy and narrow understanding of it, but according to his own All-seeing Mind and Meaning in it.

2. Because this way of Family-Prayers, (1) All (2) together, and (3) upon their knees, saying these things both Morning and Evening, is such as the most busie and most employed Family that is may have time for: And yet such too, as the most slender and ignorant Ruler, whether man or woman is able to perform: And yet that which being offered to God with true Devotion, Attention, and Intention, is to him as acceptable as any Prayers whatsoever; nay, not the less, but the more acceptable for the fervency occasioned by the Brevity: Because they can offer it most leisurely and considerately, and so most earnestly and ardently. And hereunto, That owning their God every day thus in common, they do assure themselves, whatever falls out to them it *shall* be and is a Dispensation or Blessing out of *Sion*, or such as Religion

sanctified to them; especially when every one of and in the Family has a great charge laid upon him and her, for daily performing his or her own secret and personal Devotions, according to his or her own secret and personal Necessities, Occasions, and Impulses.

The Worship it self.

(1.)

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, Amen.

(2.)

Let us pray for our selves and all others, as the Lord Jesus Christ himself hath both taught and commanded us, *Our Father which art in Heaven. Hallowed be thy Name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done in Earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver*

liver us from evil, for thine is the Kingdom, the Power and the Glory, for ever and ever, Amen.

(3.)

Let us bless the Lord our God for all his Mercies, in that form of words which to him is most acceptable; *Glo-ry be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end, Amen.*

(4.)

The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost be with us all evermore, Amen. Besides this shorter ordinary way of Family-Prayers, they have also, whensoever they see they have time enough, a larger way of praying; but still by this Prayer of Prayers. For first they say it for the Holy Catholick Church, or for the whole estate of Christs Church mili-

tant

...ant here upon Earth, with this Intro-
...ction, *Let us pray for the whole Estate*
...f Christs Church militant bere upon
Earth. And then most devoutly and
leisurely do they *in the Name of the*
...ather, Son, and Holy Ghost, offer up
for the Lords Prayer, all the while think-
ing of the whole Church. Next, for
the Particular Church wherein they
are, with the Governours of it, with this
preparation, *Let us pray for our King and*
...his whole Church and State. And then,
In the Name of the Father, Son, and
Holy Ghost, saying, *Our Father which*
art---most leisurely and fervently; all
the while thinking of the King and all
his Dominions both in Church and
State. After this for the particular
Neighbourhood, wherunto they do
belong, and the particular Guide there-
of; with this Introduction, *Let us pray*
for our Minister, and this whole Parish
where Gods Providence hath seated us:
And then, *In the Name of the---Our Fa-*
ther which art---Both most religiously
and leisurely uttered; all the while
thinking of their respective Parish and
Mi-

Minister. In the fourth place, *Let us pray for all Enemies, Persecutors, and Slanderers, &c.* In the fifth, *For any sick, weak, or otherwise in Danger, Necessity and Tribulation; Namely in the, Let us pray, him or her, or them, to whom they are ready to be so charitable.* In the sixth, *For the blessing of God upon the fruits of the Earth.* In the seventh, for any emergent especial occasion; for instance, for the Parliament when sitting, for Ordination of good Ministers before the four Ordination-Sundays. For any Women in travel, any friend in a journey, or engaged in any dangerous weighty business. For seasonable weather, &c. Concluding still in the same manner, for themselves then gathered together; thus, *In the last place, Let us pray for our selves here now assembled; In the Name of the Father, &c, Glory be to the Father, &c. Our Father, &c. The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, &c.*

Now the way how they came to be confident and resolved in this way of praying for others, as well as for themselves, was this.

First,

First, with great comfort and thankfulness of heart, they did think much of that most merciful gift of Christ to his Church, the *Lords Prayer*. Secondly, with no less cheerfulness and encouragement did they consider, That the Lord Jesus in expresse words bids them whenever they pray, to say that Prayer; *When ye pray, (saith he) say, Our Father, &c. Luk. 11. 2.* Thereby plainly teaching them, that it was by him intended for all times, occasions, and purposes whatsoever. And being there is nothing necessary either for Soul or body, either for this, or for the life to come, but therein couched it is and comprehended and meant, and understood by God the composer and hearer of the Prayer; though not by us perhaps the offerers. In devout asking of all the blessings, and of the whole matter of this Prayer, not according to their own weak and low understanding of it, but according to Gods wisdom in it, and his most gracious and fatherly intention towards Mankind by it: I say, in devout leisurely and confide-

siderate putting up this Prayer unto God, they did assure themselves, they prayed most worthily and acceptedly for Friends, for Enemies, for Children, for Parents, for Masters, for Servants, for King, for Church, for State, for Priest, for Neighbours, for Pastors, for Guide, for any sick, or otherwise distressed. If all the while they offered up this Prayer upon this or that occasion, all along they thought most wistly and affectionately of him, her, it, or them, that they then meant good to. Nay they then assured themselves, they had prayed for him, her, it, or them, as to the hearer of Prayers was acceptable, and so to the person or persons, or body prayed for, effectual or beneficial one way or other. In the third and last place, whereas some perhaps may object and say, that understand they cannot, how any mans Faith, Repentance, or Religiousness can benefit another, nor can they call to mind that ever they knew their Prayer for any else had ever the desired effect and event. This rub they were taught to put out of their way

way by these five Considerations.

(1.) It is indeed no sense nor reason at all that any mans Religiousness or Devotion should in the least benefit any besides himself; no, *nor himself neither*; but only that God hath promised, *that it shall*. Here, here is all the power and energy of Prayer; God hath commanded it for others, as well as for our selves, and in six hundred places hath promised to be overcome by it, *at such time*, and in *such ways*, as he sees most fit and necessary. So not the Prayers themselves, but Gods promise that upon our Prayers he will do so and so, *This is the All in All*. But if those six hundred Promises were not in Scripture so *express*, yet the commands for praying for others, being *most express*, it were enough: Because as every promise almost does suppose a command, so also does every command imply a promise; this command for instance, for Intercession, *that prevail it shall*; for God never commands frivolous, fruitless and successless things.

(2.) As to the event and real effect
of

of Prayers, the Word they were taught, informs us to this purpose.

1. That the Creature is to do his duty, and to leave the issue to God, the event being Gods care and business, not the Creatures, *Mark 4. 26, 27. So is the Kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground, and should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up he knows not how.*

(2.) That the event is always that which is *best*, though *not that* which the Votary did particularly aim at. As when *Saul* fought for nothing but his Fathers Affes, but met, we know, with the Kingdom of *Israel*. And *Abrahams* Prayer for all *Sodom* is answered by the signal deliverance of his neer kinsman *Lot*; for so saith the Text, *And it came to pass when God destroyed the Cities of the Plain, that God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when he overthrew the Cities, in the which Lot dwelt, Gen. 19. 29.* Nay, *omnibus positis*, the world being as it *was*, and *is*, nothing
could

could be, *can* be, better than it *was*, and is. Besides, they that wait upon God in his ways, especially that of praying for others as well as for themselves; these do always find all events, good unto them and to the universe, one way or other; for to such, the Lord who made Heaven and Earth, and rules all, makes all events to be blessings out of Sion, as the *Psalmist* speaks, *Psal.* 134. 3. That is, to be not only *Secular* events, but also Sion-blessings; or such as he uses to sanctifie to his Church, to Sion and all praying Believers; and likewise to enable them to be well contented with them, be they never so harsh and distastful to flesh and blood; yet still something of comfort and satisfaction do they, *by vertue of their walking in the ways of Sion*, find and deprehend in them; according to that most Orthodox and most common word of the believing *Hebrews*, when any thing very cross fell out *to or upon* them, *Gam zu le tobha*, would they say, *Even this for good*.

For the unerring eye of Providence,
or

or *Omnividence*, said they, *ſaw*, and *ſees*, what *was* and *is* beſt and moſt neceſſary for the univerſe; and ſo, according to occaſions, *made* and *makes*, or *ſuffered* and *ſuffers* that ſtill to fall out.

(3.) When thoſe we pray for, ſuch as the impure *Sodomites*, have made themſelves incapable of our Charity, yet is our Zeal and Charity to do good, not the *leſs*, but the *more* acceptable in the ſight of God; and returns with the choiceſt of all answers into our own boſoms; that is, with an increaſe of the choiceſt Grace; that is, more and more Heavenly-mindedneſs, and more and more publick ſpirit.

(4.) All labour in vain is not vain labour; that is, labour in vain as to this or that particular deſign, is not vain labour, as to the general aim of Chriſtianity and Religion. No, that many times is moſt attained and promoted, when the other may ſeem quite blaſted and defeated.

Ye poorer and unlearned, ſee your advantageous and eaſie way of Family-prayers in your Brethren; and be not

to great enemies to your own Souls, and to the Souls of those who are under your Authority. As any time hereafter morning and evening, not to seek God in your Families in this *short* and *ease*, but *effectual* way; and make no question but that God who understands *Hearts* better than we do *Words*, will most graciously accept both the *Hearts* and *Words*, because *these* of his own *endi-*
ing, as *those* of his own *exciting*.

see then (saith the Apostle) that ye walk *circumspectly not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord* Ephes. 5. 15, 16, 17. As if he should have said in other words thus; Seeing the days are so evil, so perilous, and so theistical, and withal so contagious and poisoning, as ye see they are, do not fail to redeem time for this *little* (as one would say, to find or make time for using this sovereign Antidote) in your respective Families, twice every four and twenty hours at the least; or certainly if ye do not *understand what the will of*

the Lord is in this and many such-like Scriptures. If yet ye have not done it, yet now at length do it, and let not this reproach lie at the doors of professed Christians, that Family-prayers, like set and costly meals, are to be seen and found only among the rich and learned. Do but break into it, and begin, and after one week the Devil and former neglect will never be able to cast you back into your old stupour, indisposition and benumbedness.

To conclude, whereas that word, *μὴ α β. βλίσσον, μὴ α κακόν* great volume, great vanity, was never more true than now, because men of poverty cannot buy such Books, and men of business cannot read them. We shall put no more to you at this time but this one thing, the long and happy experience of sundry your Brethren, which assures you, that if this due care among sundry other, ye do take of your *Families*, this benefit for certain ye shall find to your *selves*, namely, That in your secret, proper and personal Prayers and Ejaculations, whether *up* or in bed, whether for your selves, or

for

For others, ye shall see your selves every day more and more enlarged and affected, than ever ye did, when this open regard of your Families ye had not (as one would say in the words of the Prophet *Ezekiel*, when ye did not study the turning of others as well as of your selves, *Ezek. 18. 30. 32. Wherefore turn your selves, and live ye.* Margent, *Wherefore turn others and live ye.* Especially if ye do not fail often to mind your Families both jointly and severally, both by one and altogether; that to these family-prayers they add, praying by themselves every one *to* himself, and *by* himself, as often as he shall find himself leisure and thereunto disposed, and that never seldomer may it be, than every night when he goes to bed, and every morning when he ariseth. And every Father of the Family let him never forget but always well remember, that the only way to have good Children and good Servants, is to be sure to make them good Christians. And all whatsoever, Masters, Servants, Parents, Children, Landlords, Tenants, Kings,

Subjects, Pastors, People, Husbands, Wives, all of all estates, conditions and capacities whatsoever; Know we all, one great reason why we all have so little comfort one of another, seems to be this, Because we have so little Christian care one of another. For if Kings, for instance, would pray more for the Kingdom of God to rule in their Subjects, their Kingdoms certes would not be so shaken with Rebellions and Seditions as they be. And on the other side, if Subjects would be more praying, that their Kings might study more to *hallow* Gods Name, than to *honour* their own, they would see Reason questionless to be more willing to confess them the Fathers of their Country, and under God, the authors and maintainers of their Prosperity. If Husbands would say the Lords-prayer for their Wives oftener than they do, God would keep their Wives from saying their Prayers backwards for them, so oft as many do. Fathers and Mothers would be more *Our Father* for their Children, the Children being wrought upon by their Fa-

the

ther in Heaven, would become more dutiful to their Parents on Earth. If people would pray more that the Angels of God in this World his Ministers, might do the will of God on Earth. as done it is by the Angels in Heaven, they would see more things in them to rejoyce in, than now they do to lament and find fault with. If Masters would pray more that God would give their Servants their daily bread in the full extent and true meaning of that word, the daily bread which they do give them would doubtless be much better resented and requited by them, than now ordinarily it is. And then according to the Ordinance of King *Ethelbert*, who gave all mean Lords their Estates upon three Conditions, and one of them this, That they should be Fathers to their Tenants: Then I say, would Landlords doubtless be a kind of loving Fathers to their Tenants, and they back again as good as Sons to their Landlords; if both would make great conscience of offering up *Our Father*, for one another daily, constantly, and devoutly.

In

In a word if *all*, that is, if *men*, as St. Paul orders, *Phil* 2. 1. *Would not seek every one his own things only*, but think and study, and pray every man *for the things of others also*; then would there be clean another face of things in the World than now is; even as it is in the next verse, *The same mind in us*, in a good measure, *as was in Christ Jesus*.

But when all the intercourse between the respective Estates and Conditions, is nothing but what we *see*; every one prating and practising for himself, and scarce any one, praying, or so much as propounding for any other, no marvel so *many, very many* are for the good of themselves only, and so few able to do themselves or others any real good at all.

Si in sua quisque viciniâ, hanc aut similem fatigandi, [Isa. 62. 7.] Deum suum rationem, suos omnes κατ' ὅρον, docerent Ecclesiæ Ministri, eamque iis in usum redigerent, effectum daretur haud dubie multum boni, multumq; mali, par-
tim

*tim anteverteretur; partim sanaretur.
Quod faxit Deus, per & propter Je-
sum Christum Advocatum, Dominum &
Mediatorem nostrum. Amen.*

F I N I S.
